



**UNITED STATE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**  
**National Marine Fisheries Service**  
**Southeast Fisheries Science Center**  
75 Virginia Beach Drive  
Miami, Florida 33149 U.S.A.

January 29, 2016

Dear colleagues and friends,

Please join us for our 2016 [Science Program Review](#). This year the Southeast Fisheries Science Center will conduct a review of our ecosystem science programs. Similar reviews are being carried out at each of the six National Marine Fisheries Service science centers and at our headquarters Office of Science and Technology as part of a multi-year process to evaluate thematic components of our science enterprise.

The review will take place in Miami, Florida, on March 14-16, 2016 at the [Courtyard Marriott in Coconut Grove](#). The agenda will be available soon, but for planning purposes, the meeting will be held from approximately 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM each day. We are making arrangements for a webinar to enable interested individuals to observe the meeting remotely. Details regarding the webinar will be posted to our [program review website](#) as soon as they are available.

A team of scientific experts with backgrounds in ecosystems science and monitoring, coral reef communities, fisheries science, quantitative ecology, and oceanography will conduct the upcoming peer review. The reviewers will provide advice to the Southeast Fisheries Science Center on the direction and quality of our current ecosystem science activities and will assess our institutional readiness to transition to ecosystem science in the future. Opportunities for public comment will be provided each day. Information on the meeting including background documents, panelists, agenda, and review presentations will be posted to our [program review website](#).

Reviewers' reports and the Southeast Fisheries Science Center's response will also be made available at this website later this year. We expect this review will highlight some of our strengths but also identify areas where improvement is merited, and help us to chart a course to advance our ecosystem science programs. Peer reviews are an integral part of maintaining a strong science program as we adapt to new challenges and new ideas. We hope that you can join us in Miami for the review or visit our website to review the documents and presentations.

Sincerely,

Bonnie J. Ponwith, Ph.D.  
Science and Research Director